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Heaven and Hell

WHAT THEY ARE AND WHERE THEY ARE

BY

DR. J. BALL

Author of The Foundations of Life, Etc.

PRICE 25 CENTS

PUBLISHED BY

J. BALL, AT 1073½ MARKET STREET

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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Heaven and Hell.



HEAVEN AND HELL are places just as real as the earth is, and far more permanent. The same invincible, unbreakable and undeviating laws of nature are in force there also. As the laws of nature organize physical matter into spheres or globes, so they organize the spiritual or psychic world into like spheres. Wherever there is a physical or material globe there is a psychic or spiritual sphere permeating and surrounding it. It is this psychic envelope of the physical world which constitutes the spirit world.

Heaven and hell are relative terms. Heaven is the upper and less dense regions of the spirit world, while hell is the denser and lower regions thereof. Indeed, hell, or some portions of it, is on a level with the earth's surface. We are, therefore, surrounded at all times by evil and undeveloped spirits of men and animals. It is these spirits which we see in our dreams. As Jesus and the apostles had no true conception of the structure of the earth and solar system, it follows that their knowledge of the nature and relationship of heaven and hell was imperfect and erroneous. Hell, like this earth, is only a temporary abode of the undeveloped and evil-minded. Heaven is the permanent home of the mature and perfect.

That our knowledge of the spiritual or psychic world has not advanced in proportion to our knowledge of the physical world is due almost entirely to the paralyzing effect of Christianity on the human mind. Jesus and the

apostles had no other ways and means of studying this subject than you and I have. And I am quite sure that the Christian Bible is no more trustworthy as a guide in spiritual matters than it would be as a text-book on chemistry, geology or astronomy.

Although we now live in, or animate, a physical body, life itself is spiritual or psychic. Our bodies are not really a part of us. During sleep we often leave the body and wander about the spirit world and thus prepare ourselves for death, which is, in reality, our birth into the spirit world untrammelled by any connection with the body. Death is really the one thing we should look forward to and prepare for, just as a man in jail looks forward to the day he will be set at liberty to begin a new and better life.

It may be asked, if these things are so, why don't we know more about them? Well, it needs intelligence, and intelligence rightly used, to know anything. Why don't we know enough to keep our livers and stomachs in order? Why is it that the whole human race has not yet developed enough intelligence to prevent the bellyache? Simply because we don't use what little intelligence we have in the right way. The combined intelligence of a mother and father will not enable their baby to walk. It is the same with all the functions of life, spiritual as well as physical. Because Jesus, or St. Paul, or Shakespeare knew, or said, or did certain things is of not the slightest consequence to us—we must know them and do them before they are of any value to us.

I am so insistent in opposing all Biblical teachings, because I am sure that nobody can make any progress in spiritual knowledge so long as he believes the Bible is an authority on the subject. Mind, soul, spirit, steam, air

and breath are all one and the same thing to Biblical authors. Then how can they be an authority on a subject which they knew nothing about? The Bible does not deal with God, and God had nothing to do with it. Science,—astronomy, geology, chemistry and physics,—is the only thing which teaches us anything about God. Sir Isaac Newton was the real discoverer of God, for gravitation furnishes the keynote to God's character. The Bible is merely a record of men's dealings with spirits, and evil spirits at that.

Good spirits do not visit the earth—no spirit ever left heaven and came down to earth. The heaven of which Jesus and his apostles spoke is not heaven, but a probationary state situated between heaven and hell. "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," is not true. There are no children in heaven. Heaven is a place where only the mature and developed can enter. The place where young children go when they die is the probationary sphere between heaven and hell, where they are out of the reach of evil spirits, but they cannot get into heaven until they have prepared themselves to live there without assistance from anybody else. In other words, every living thing which enters heaven must be mature, self-reliant and able to conduct its own life without interfering with or being dependent in any manner upon anybody else. And as children are immature and dependent beings they cannot enter heaven. I am absolutely certain that no children ever get into heaven—it is simply impossible for them to do so.

There is no injustice to children in this. Heaven is a place which we must prepare ourselves for, unaided by any influence outside ourselves. We cannot get into heaven in bunches nor by twos and threes—each individual

works his own way into heaven by purifying himself; that is, by increasing his own buoyancy. There are no gates to pass through and no golden stairs to climb. We get into heaven just as a balloon gets above the clouds—by our own buoyancy.

Jesus Christ was a good man, but His views of God, heaven, and the human soul were false. God is not a personal god; heaven is not the home of children; and our souls are not lost—we are simply ignorant and undeveloped.

So far as published records show, Shakespeare is the only man the world has heretofore produced who thoroughly understood spirits and their relationship with ourselves. Macbeth is the only perfect piece of spiritual philosophy the world's literature contains. All true poets have given us impressions of the spirit world, but they are all more or less distorted and, therefore, unreliable. Dante was crazed with love; Goethe supposed that the rites and symbols of the church were practised and recognized in the spirit world just as they are here. In fact, all writers on this subject, except Shakespeare, have treated it as a supernatural one, dealing either with a kind of diabolism or presaging some portentous event.

As a matter of fact, spirits of men and other animals surround us and meddle with the incidents of our lives from the moment we are born till we die—and then we become one of them. The more intelligent of these meddling spirits have the advantage of us inasmuch as they once occupied a body similar to our own and know how to use it. So far as the conscious control of our actions is concerned, our own body may be likened to a piano, the keyboard of which is our brain. Now "familiar spirits"—that is, spirits which are constantly around us—can cut

in, so to speak, and inject impressions, thoughts, or ideas into our minds, and thus lead us into doing whatever they want us to do, while we think we are carrying out our own plans.

Drunkards, gamblers, and criminals of all kinds are led on and assisted by these meddlesome spirits. This fact does not relieve the drunkard or the criminal of the consequences of his criminal acts. Ignorance is no excuse for wrongdoing, neither in this world nor the next. The propagators of Christianity have a very heavy load of responsibility to work off in the doctrine of the remission of the consequences of our wrongdoings. Before we can reach heaven we have to pay every debt we owe, and right every wrong we have ever done. No god and no saviour can ever relieve us of one iota of our responsibilities. I am absolutely certain that every human being must work out his or her own salvation and rectify every injustice they have ever been guilty of.

We cannot injure nor offend God; so all our anxiety and fears on this score are needless and fruitless alarms due to our ignorance of God and our relationship to him. But we can and do injure our fellow-men by deceiving them and acting unjustly towards them, and it is this injustice to our fellow-man which we have to atone for and rectify before we can enter the kingdom of heaven.

The fact that our enemies forgive us does not relieve us from the necessity of righting every wrong we have ever done. Every wrong we do constitutes a blot on our own soul's record which we must eradicate before we can enter heaven. This self-purification is the underlying fact of the Scriptural sanctification. But religion—Christianity in common with all other religions—has carried the compromising and “grafting” methods of our every-day busi-

ness and social affairs into spirit life and with the same confusing and disastrous results.

Heaven is a real place, and the home of just men and women made perfect. But this perfection is not merely a polished surface, nor is it in any sense a reward given us for services rendered to God or anybody else. The perfection which enables us to enter heaven is acquired by our own efforts at right living, based on the development of our own inherent sense of justice. We do not have to please God before we can enter heaven any more than we had to please God before we were born into this physical life. God has no more to do with the lives of the people in heaven than he has with our lives here, or with the lives of those who are in hell.

Our lives—your life and my life—are based on immutable laws which our beliefs cannot in the least affect, any more than our theories can affect the movements of the solar system. There is no efficacy in a vicarious sacrifice in psychic or spirit life—you cannot pay anybody else's debts, nor can anybody else pay yours. The fundamental law of life is that each individual must work out its own salvation, pay its own debts, and make ample amends for every injustice it is ever guilty of.

Heaven is a place where we enjoy life to its fullest extent. Not where we sing the praises of an unknown God, but where we get everything we desire; where every man knows what he wants and has the power to get it. The man who is satisfied with a few things gets them and nothing more, because no man in heaven is burdened with anything he does not want. The man who has many wants and great desires has them all satisfied, because every legitimate desire carries with it the power to gratify it, and so long as we are capable of having any illegitimate desires we cannot get into heaven.

While burdened with a physical body we are liable to be thrown amongst uncongenial persons, but in the upper spiritual regions our inherent magnetic qualities attract only congenial or friendly spirits, while all others are repelled. No spirit in heaven would be guilty of violating this fundamental law of life. No person whose presence is not agreeable to us could or would associate with us in heaven. Heaven is a place of harmony, where no discord is possible. There are no bad-tempered persons in heaven—nobody who would annoy or take an unfair advantage of anybody else. There are no Christians, no politicians, no doctors, no lawyers, no trades unionists, no propagandists in heaven, for every person is a law unto himself, and has absolute control of his own life and destiny.

It is questionable if anybody has reached this condition, while yet imprisoned in the body; but this is immaterial. But what is material and essential is that we recognize the fact that our eternal well-being is in our own hands, and the sooner we begin to cut loose from all external entanglements the sooner we shall be free to enjoy eternal happiness without anything to mar its serenity. But we must develop this power within ourselves, and not rely on any extraneous assistance.

No living thing ever has been or ever can be assisted into heaven. Absolute self-reliance and self-control is essential before we can enter heaven. This self-reliance can be developed only in one way—by each individual trusting in and relying upon himself in all the manifold activities of life. We must not rely on anybody else's assistance; we must not ask favors from anybody; we must not depend upon rents from property nor interest from investments, for these things are necessarily temporary, and at death, if not before, will fail us.

We are necessarily immortal and cannot die. Therefore the only things which are of lasting benefit to us are those which remain with us after we leave this physical body. The prevalence of religious ideas in all ages of the world and amongst all classes of people bears testimony to the fact that man considers his spiritual nature of more importance than the physical. That all religious ideas are essentially false ones does not vitiate the fact from which they arise. The vagaries of religion are due to man's immorality, or weakness in mistrusting himself and making an external god. The result is the same (a manufactured god) whether the god be one of wood or stone, or an ancestor, or the sun, or an idealized god like the Christian's. The gods of the pagan, the Christian and the Jew are all equally false.

The sun worshippers did not worship the real sun. They endowed the sun with fanciful personal qualities which it did not possess, and worshipped these unreal qualities. Christians are doing essentially the same thing. They have attributed to God many personal qualities which He does not possess, and they worship these unreal attributes of God which have no existence outside their own minds. Christianity, therefore, is simply a modernized form of paganism and the rankest kind of idolatry.

It was Sir Isaac Newton who discovered God. Jesus Christ's ideas of God were essentially erroneous. And what is more, I am satisfied that He realized His mistake when He cried out: "My God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" This realization of the falsity of His teachings disheartened Him so much that He became an easy prey to His persecutors and died broken-hearted. Had he been of a less sensitive nature and more robust intellectually, and enabled thus to fight back and overcome His

enemies, He would, no doubt, have changed the whole tenor of His teachings.

We must be born again. When our body dies we are born into the spirit world. This is the hour of our emancipation, for while we remain in the body we are fettered and manacled in prison. While in the body we are only in the kindergarten stage of life, and it is just as foolish for us to think of accumulating money or property and settling down here as it would be for us to expect a child to finish its education while in the infant class at school. While in school we look forward to the day of graduation with pleased anticipation. This is just exactly how we should look upon death.

Just as our physical birth ended the period of gestation and set us free from dependence on our mother for breath and nourishment, so our physical death sets us free from all external restraints and leaves us free to enjoy life in any and every natural way we desire to—that is, if we understand the true nature of death and have prepared ourselves accordingly. The man who is afraid of death—the man who has spent his life accumulating material wealth and has come to rely upon it—the man (rich or poor) who has come to look upon gold as the one thing needful—will find death a disappointment. They will be freed from the physical restraints of the body, but they will find themselves enmeshed in a network of habits, false desires, and abnormal beliefs which will still hold them to the earth. The first truth these earth-bound people have to learn is that the chains which hold them down are of their own forging. The elemental truth of life is that it develops from within—it cannot grow by accretion.

There is no such thing as physical life. A body lives only so long as a soul animates it; when the soul leaves it

the body crumbles into its elemental molecules. A soul cannot die. A soul (your soul and my soul) when it leaves the body still lives in the spirit world and clothes itself with a spirit body, which is an exact expression of the soul's character. We get our physical body from our parents, and it expresses more or less of their characters as well as our own. Our bodies are not plastic enough; they do not exactly express our ideas of manly or womanly beauty, and so we wear clothes to modify our appearance. Our religion and our clothes originate from similar causes. We are not what we would like to be, or what we think we ought to be; so we create our artificial god and call upon him to change our hearts and make us spiritually beautiful, while we array our bodies in more or less costly raiment to hide our physical defects. Both methods are essentially wrong.

We must change ourselves—develop the forces within ourselves so that we may become whatever we want to be, without the assistance of God, man or devil. We can do this—every living thing will be able to do this in time. It is comparatively of little consequence whether it takes one year or ten thousand years to reach the goal of life, because eternity is ours in which to accomplish our purposes. The man who makes haste to get rich is a fool, because he wastes his life chasing a chimera. The only real power we possess is within us, and though we may sometimes feel disappointed that we are underrated while so many gilded fools around us are valued much above their worth, still we know that in a little while we shall all be valued at our true value. There is no “graft” in the life beyond the grave. The men who put up a good “front” are down with the men who have a “pull” and amongst the “push” in hell. None of these men can reach or in

any way be amongst those who desire to live and let live, and who do as they would be done by.

After death each man goes to his own place. Our characters, or psychic qualities, determine the direction we shall take and the place we shall arrive at. We are not isolated. Our souls are always in communication with the spirit or psychic world, whether we are asleep or awake. Animals and children are more sensitive to psychic influences, as a rule, than grown-up people; and women are more generally sensitive than men, because the hardening and narrowing influence of materialism is more potent in adults than in children and in men than in women. Migratory birds are led by telepathy from their summer to their winter quarters, and vice versa. Bird spirits can foresee the coming change of season and send out psychic waves, or telepathic impressions to those still in the body directing them to suitable quarters for wintering or summering, as the case may be. The birds' minds have nothing to do with their change of location. Their minds are busy procuring food and avoiding enemies.

Many people keep their psychic or intuitive faculties more or less active in spite of the depressing influences of our every-day life. Pre-eminent in this respect were Jesus and Shakespeare. The great difference between these two men lay in the superior intellect of Shakespeare. Jesus knew that he knew more about human life than the people about him did; so he started in to teach them all he knew. Shakespeare also knew that he knew more about human life than any of his predecessors or contemporaries knew; but he also realized that the truth as he saw it would bring down on his head the tortures of the Church and all the cruelties of the law as then administered, without in any degree advancing the cause of truth.

No man's martyrdom ever advanced the cause of truth. The truth is sublimely indifferent to our efforts to sustain it. Our mind will not accept a truth till it gets ready. The higher spirits knew all about the law of gravitation thousands of years ago, and they have been sending out telepathic waves about it ever since they discovered it, but the physical mind of man was not prepared to accept till Sir Isaac Newton's time; then it struck the world with the force of a new truth.

When the human mind receives a truth which is new to it (the mind), as when Sir Isaac Newton first realized the law of gravitation, it is illuminated as by a flood of light. This illuminating effect of a new truth on the human mind is the Biblical coming of the Holy Ghost. The various authors who composed the Bible were, for the most part, honest men, but very few of them were intellectually great. No branch of knowledge had a scientific basis in those days, with the possible exception of mathematics. That the sudden flooding of the mind with a new truth should be ascribed to a personal visitation of God is, perhaps, not very surprising in an over-enthusiastic person like St. Paul, but that the human race should continue to accept for nearly two thousand years such a farcical explanation of so common a mental phenomenon is positive proof that religion and common sense are incompatible.

This earth is a kind of casting shop where spiritual and physical are brought together and cast into a living individual, having the characteristics of its producers, or parents. After a short period of infancy, during which we are dependent upon our parents, we become self-dependent and more or less complete master of our destiny. Life itself is a refining process which eliminates the dross

and impurities from nature and allows us to ascend gradually in the scale of self-reliant being. Our troubles are due to our immaturity. We are still in the primary school of life, and are constantly shirking our lessons, or coaxing our school-fellows to do them for us. We may cram for a school examination and thus get a higher percentage than we are justly entitled to; but we cannot do this in the school of life. The sooner we recognize these facts—that all the relationships of life are governed by absolute justice, that we must pay up every cent we owe, that we must right every wrong we have ever done, that we must sow before we can reap, and that we can reap only such crops as the seed we have sown can produce—the sooner we shall be in a condition to enjoy life as nature intended it should be enjoyed.

The end of life is enjoyment. No matter whether we are a canary bird or a man, we should enjoy doing whatever we want to do. To live rightly we must be free to follow where our highest aspirations lead. We cannot do this as long as we are dependent on the will and caprice of others. We must be self-reliant and self-dependent, or we are not free. It necessarily follows that we must not seek to control others. When our children arrive at the age of discretion they have as much right to their individual freedom as we have. The relationship of parent and child is merely a temporary blood relationship. There is no such relationship recognized in heaven. It is quite true that we shall know who our parents were; but we shall also know who our ancestors were a million years ago if we are interested enough in the matter to trace them back, but this does not constitute a natural relationship. The only relationship recognized in heaven is a psycho-magnetic one. Our friends are such because we want their com-

panionship and they want ours—there are no ill-assorted friendships in heaven. Our wives are such because we want them and they want us. There are no contracts and no formal marriages in heaven. Age is not recognized in heaven—a spirit of twenty years may have a friend or a wife two hundred thousand years old. It's their magnetic qualities which determine the nature of their companionship. There are no enmities in heaven. Spirits who are not mutually adaptable do not associate with each other; no good spirit is capable of intruding where he is not wanted.

The ancestor worship of some Oriental nations is merely a religion, and like all other religions is false and pernicious. They endow their ancestors with imaginary qualities and powers, and worship these imaginary attributes. Of course, some of our ancestors may be among the spirits who are constantly interfering with our daily affairs, but as all these meddling spirits are undeveloped, and therefore bad, they are not entitled to our consideration in any other way than to be avoided and prevented from doing us harm. We should not seek the advice or assistance of spirits under any circumstances. Wicked spirits will not help us unless by so doing they can increase their control over us, and good spirits will help us all they can without asking when their help will not weaken our self-reliance. It is, therefore, immoral to pray. To say "Give us this day our daily bread" is to become a mendicant. Every time you say the Lord's Prayer you not only make use of a lot of meaningless cant, but you place yourself on a level with a common street beggar.

God has nothing to do with our daily bread, and if you can't get enough to eat go to the farmer who raises the wheat or to the baker who makes the bread, and render an equivalent for what you want. It's your business to

get your own daily bread just as it is the business of a sparrow to get his. If you have to go hungry once in a while, don't worry, but look around and you will see a way by which you can climb out of your hole. But if you begin to beg or pray you will find yourself sinking deeper in the hole. God, or good spirits, only help those who help themselves. Self-reliance is man's only salvation.

Although the lower spheres of the spirit world are located at and near the earth's surface, flesh and blood cannot enter therein. Every living thing is a spirit. We are spirits now—just as much as we will be after the death of our bodies. But while we are imprisoned in the body we cannot segregate ourselves on a spiritual basis. At death, on leaving the body, an honest man with intelligence enough to grasp the significance of his changed conditions will rise into his natural sphere where he will be surrounded by friends who will congratulate him and bid him welcome. The benighted sot and the degraded sensualist will not rise but fall, for the lower regions of the spirit world are beneath the earth's surface. This is why Dante and others associate hell with a lake of fire and brimstone. Of course, fire cannot hurt a spirit, but the more degraded a spirit is the more matter clings to him and weighs him down. A bad spirit is more material and heavier than a good spirit; that's why he occupies a lower place in the spirit world. The very lowest and most degraded spirits are amidst the fires beneath the earth's crust, and as they are yet encrusted with so much matter the heat causes them considerable suffering. This suffering urges them to seek a means of escape. Sooner or later they learn that they can escape only by their own efforts at self-purification. When they reach this stage their salvation is assured, for sooner or later this self-purification will fit them for heaven.

Millions of spirits are earth-bound who are not so degraded as Shakespeare has typified in Caliban, but whose earthly habits have such a hold on them as to keep them interested in business affairs, property, and such matters. Jesus understood the pernicious effects of being absorbed in property interests, as is manifest by his advising the rich young man to sell all he had and divide the proceeds among the poor. This is not the best thing the young man could have done, but it is proof that Jesus understood that spirits do not own property and that the habit of looking on a piece of property as his own tends to bind a man to earth after he is dead, because he dislikes to go away and leave anything he considers valuable behind him. This earth is not our home, anymore than our mother's womb was. Our life in the body is merely developmental. We ought not to expect to reach a state of mature perfection in this body any more than we should expect a child to acquire a university education in a primary school. The death of the body—that is, our escape from it—is a necessary part of our development. The fewer and weaker the ties which bind us to earth the better for us. Nature has provided death as a means of destroying all those artificial props and supports on which we seem so prone to lean. The end of life is to be self-reliant and self-supporting. We can never attain happiness otherwise.

When we die after doing our whole duty on earth as we have understood it, providing our earthly shackles are not too strong for us to break, we shall rise to that sphere of the spirit world which corresponds with our psychic character or quality. All our faculties will here manifest themselves in their fullest extent. Our consciences will be quickened. We shall see wherein we have fallen short of doing as we ought to have done. We shall not whine and pray for forgiveness, but we shall start right in and rectify all our shortcomings. Whether it takes one year or a thousand years we shall not desire to rest until we have paid up all our debts and righted all our wrong-doings. As we undo the things we ought not to have done and do the things we had heretofore left undone, we shall rise from sphere to sphere till we reach that sphere in which

all spirits are just and perfect in all the relationships of life. This is heaven.

Every spirit in heaven has achieved his own salvation. No spirit in heaven is worried about his past life, nor has he any fears of the future. Every spirit in heaven has absolute control of himself and knows that he possesses the power to get everything he wants without interfering with the rights of any other spirit. Every spirit in heaven is in his right place and is absolute ruler over all beneath him. Every spirit in heaven knows that the spirits in the sphere above him are wiser and more powerful than he is, and that any commands they may issue are for the general good and must be obeyed.

Every spirit in heaven has absolute control over the natural forces in his own sphere. He can, therefore, create his own house, or mansion, or castle and landscape to please himself. His or her own personal adornment is whatever he or she desires it should be. There is no vanity, no jealousy, no enmity, nor no misery in heaven. Every male spirit has as many wives as he wants, because he wants no more than he ought to have, and any of his wives have a perfect and unquestioned right to leave him if they desire to do so. There are no contracts made in heaven, because no spirit would hold another to a contract he or she was unable or unwilling to carry out, and no spirit would promise to do anything but what he knew beforehand he was perfectly able and willing to perform.

Heaven is a place of perfect harmony and the permanent home of all good spirits who have made themselves perfect. And although these spirits cannot come down here to visit us they can, and do, continually send messages to all who are able to intercept them about the nature of man and his glorious destiny. But we must attune our souls to receive these telepathic wave impulses, or we shall never know anything about them. Truth is pulsating through the psychic spheres constantly, and we must intercept and absorb its waves into our own souls before we can understand it. Truth cannot be communicated through books nor language; like music its harmonies must be impressed on our own psychic faculties before

we can know what it is. Jesus heard the music of the spheres; so did Shakespeare; so have all the prophets and seers and poets who ever lived. The mistake they made was in trying to make others believe that they (the prophets, etc.) were chosen instruments through which others must receive the truth. Shakespeare was the one true prophet who realized that every man must realize these things for himself; that truth lives and each individual soul must come in contact with it, not hear about nor read about it. Heaven is within the reach of every living soul, but you must work your way there by your own exertions. You must not ask for assistance nor expect it. If your troubles overwhelm you you must fight for life and liberty, and if the odds are too heavy against you, good spirits will come to your assistance without being asked; but they will not let you know that they are assisting you, because if you knew they helped you once you would expect them to help you again, and this would weaken your self-reliance, and self-reliance is the sum and substance of right living. You must realize that God is about you at all times, and closer to you than the air you breathe is. You must expand your soul to God, and truth will flow in just as the air enters your lungs when you expand your chest. Heaven is your home, and nobody but yourself can keep you from going there, and the sooner you realize this fact and begin to trust solely in yourself the sooner you will find the peace which passeth understanding, and know that life's happiness is within your own keeping.

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The Foundations of Life

By DR. J. BALL

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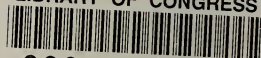
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